

In addition, Applicants submit herewith a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement.

Section 103 Rejection

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Kempf (U.S. 5,674,882). The Examiner states that Kempf discloses ritonavir and the use of ritonavir in combination with another HIV protease inhibitor. The Examiner also states that Kempf does not teach improving the pharmacokinetics of a drug or increasing the blood levels of a drug by combining the drug with ritonavir.

The basis for the present invention is the surprising, newly discovered use of ritonavir as an inhibitor of cytochrome P450 monooxygenase (which is the subject of Claims 45-46 added by amendment herein). The claims of the present application are further directed to the use of ritonavir to improve the pharmacokinetics of a drug which is metabolized by cytochrome P450 monooxygenase and to the use of ritonavir to increase the blood levels of a drug which is metabolized by cytochrome P450 monooxygenase.

Applicants assert that the cited Kempf reference does not teach or suggest (i) the use of ritonavir as an inhibitor of cytochrome P450 monooxygenase, (ii) the use of ritonavir to improve the pharmacokinetics of a drug which is metabolized by cytochrome P450 monooxygenase or (iii) the use of ritonavir to increase the blood levels of a drug which is metabolized by cytochrome P450 monooxygenase. Therefore, the presently claimed invention is not made obvious by the Kempf reference.

In view of this, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the Section 103 rejection.

Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement

The following information is submitted pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.97 and 1.98 in accordance with Applicants' duty of disclosure under 37 C.F.R. 1.56. This submission is not an admission that the documents cited herein are prior art as to the invention claimed. Because this Information Disclosure Statement is submitted after the first Office Action on the merits, but before the issuance of a final action or a notice of allowance, Applicants hereby expressly authorize the Commissioner to charge the appropriate fee of \$240.00 (or other amount as required under 37 C.F.R. 1.17(p)) to Deposit Account No. 01-0025. Duplicate copies of this sheet are enclosed.

The following reference is known to Applicants:

1. D. Kempf, et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,886,036, issued March 23, 1999.

This reference is a division of the Kempf reference (U.S. 5,674,882) cited by the Examiner in the latest Office Action. This reference does not disclose or suggest the invention claimed in the present application.

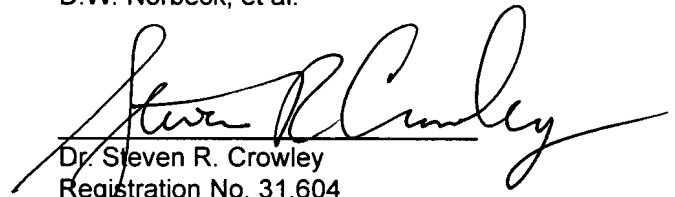
A copy of this reference is provided herewith.



Action Requested

In view of all of the above, reconsideration and allowance of Claims 1-16 and 45-46 (newly added) is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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